

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCES METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2006

Heusinger

201.

13 October 1951

MEMORANDUM FOR: ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF, G-2
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

SUBJECT : Resilitarization and the Landsberg Problem.

1. Recent conversations between our staff officers in Germany and leading German figures in the resilitarization field brought to light once more the great emphasis German officers give to the problem of the former generals imprisoned in Landsberg and Werl. There is, of course, nothing new about the problem or the position of the former German officers. What makes it a reportable item at this time is the new urgency attached to it by Chancellor Adenauer's military advisors, who are not easily agitated and who are in good position to evaluate the importance and the effect of Landsberg and Werl on German military opinion.

2. According to General Heusinger, there are really three problems in this field: (a) Landsberg, (b) Werl, and (c) the fate of some 450 German soldiers being held in France. Many of the latter group have not been tried and sentenced; many, in fact, have not yet been charged. Heusinger, who is keenly aware of the political problems which make action so difficult on this subject, particularly for Mr. McCloy, has strongly opposed the trend among the former German Officers Corps that some gesture of clemency toward their colleagues in Landsberg, Werl, and France should be prerequisite for German military collaboration. For this, Heusinger, along with those former generals who have thrown their weight solidly behind the Western defense effort, already has had to accept a good deal of criticism from their former colleagues.

3. With the resilitarization negotiations now approaching the decisive stage, and with the many veterans organizations moving closer to a united front, the problem is now, in Heusinger's opinion, critically acute. Heusinger believes that even a small gesture from the Allies would yield a large dividend in easing the pressure of veterans' impatience and smoothing the way for German-Allied military collaboration.

4. Taking full account of the hazards of public opinion both in Germany and abroad, and attempting to achieve a realistic estimate of what is desirable and possible for the Germans and the Allies,

the most influential among the conservative former senior officers—
Heusinger, Friessner, Speidel, Matzky, Schwerin, etc.—have con-
sistently argued that:

(a) There should be no attempt to reopen the cases with a
view toward setting aside the convictions;

(b) There should be no general pardon or mass release;

(c) Whatever is done should be done gradually, quietly,
inconspicuously, and without public statements.

5. As examples of what they consider possible and desirable,
these officers suggest:

(a) Paroles for the very aged, i.e. for those over 70.

(b) Medical paroles or transfer to civilian hospitals for
the ailing.

(c) Segregation from common criminals.

(d) Exemption from such indignities as the periodic body
search.

6. Our purpose in bringing the above to your attention is
merely to report the attitude of influential German military circles.
It should not be interpreted as an attempt on our part to influence
policy on this sensitive and controversial subject.

7. The above information has been disseminated to the Directors
of the Office of Intelligence, NICOG and Intelligence Division, EUCOM.

FOR THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE:

(S)
W. G. WYMAN
Assistant Director
Special Operations

SO DB-42892

-2-

_____ []
9 Oct 51

Retyped: 18 Oct 51